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Ms. Kate Wood, President
Landmark West!
45 West 67th Street
New York, NY 10023

July 19, 2016

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel (CSI)
6-10 West 70th Street - Drawing Review
Project No. 121701

Dear Ms. Wood:

In connection with proposed construction of a nine-story mixed use community facility and residential building by CSI on the referenced site, I have reviewed 2008 approved Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) plans, 2015 plans submitted to the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB plans), and 2016 updated/revised BSA plans as requested. I have also reviewed the "application" package to BSA dated June 16, 2016, along with select documents associated with the original application of 2008.

It is my understanding, based on relevant aspects of the original application, that the applicant, CSI, obtained approval for multiple zoning variances critical to the development on the basis of a professed and specific need for certain programmatic elements, namely classroom spaces for young and older students. This community-based programming was used by CSI in their application to justify a "hardship", as the existing adjacent building facility could not accommodate such needs.

The 2008 approved BSA plans illustrate those spaces, and clearly indicate 15 different classrooms on three levels of the new building.

However, the construction plans recently filed with the NYC DOB, which are more detailed and further developed, show only four classrooms. This implies that the original case made by CSI for such programmatic need may in fact have been exaggerated, calling into question the basis for the zoning variance approvals obtained from the Board of Standards and Appeals.

In the recently prepared "revised" (2016) submittal to BSA, the classrooms return to the plans, but in a way that could easily allow for the spaces to revert to other, non-community uses such as mechanical and office support space.

If in fact the classroom spaces needed by CSI are reflected in the plans filed with NYC DOB, one may reasonably question whether such limited space could have been accommodated in the existing adjacent building without the need to erect a nine-story structure as proposed.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you need anything further.

Sincerely,



Charles J. DiSanto, Principal